

## CHAPTER II

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

#### PHYSIOGRAPHY

Jackson County is located in the mountains of southwestern North Carolina. Five major mountain ranges are found within the county. The county has varied topography, with high, steep mountains, rolling foothills, elevated plateaus to level and productive farmlands. Much of the county is located within the Nantahala National Forest. Elevations range from 6,540 feet at Richland Balsam to 1,850 feet at Whittier. Streams and rivers are very prevalent in the county, with drainage to both the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>1</sup> The large amount of water within the county could greatly effect its' future growth. Many industries look for areas in which to locate with sufficient water supplies.

Jackson County is neighbored on the east by Haywood and Transylvania Counties, to the north by Swain County, to the west by Macon County and to the south by the State of Georgia. All of these areas are mountainous and share similar characteristics with Jackson County. The physical setting of the county and surrounding areas has already begun to attract many part-time residents, primarily summer residents.

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<sup>1</sup>Bill Sharpe, A New Geography of North Carolina (Raleigh, 1965) pp.1365-1366.